



VICTORY

FLASHES

from **MUHLENBERG**

December 14, 1944

Number 50

Greetings (for today and Christmas):

This letter has been delayed for a few hours (you probably won't notice the difference because we'll speed up production) while we listened to an eye-witness story of the American attack on Leyte and other actions in the Pacific from LIEUTENANT (j.g.) CHARLES FEIST '44, pilot of a carrier-based torpedo plane.

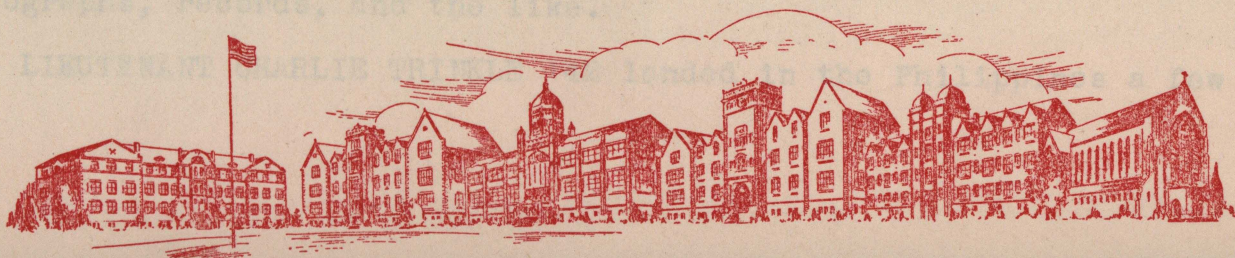
It seems like just a few months ago that Feist (and the majority of you fellows with him) were here on the campus thinking about dates and Christmas formals and the start of a long holiday vacation. Actually he has been gone for two-and-one-half years, one of them spent in action in the Pacific. Today he came back for the kind of a visit we always look forward to.

Feist was one of the Navy pilots who helped smash a good part of the Jap Fleet (you've read about it in the newspapers and heard of it on the radio) off the Philippines late in October. He knows what it feels like to be hit by flak, to make forced landings in the Pacific, to wait on life rafts until someone picks you up, to land in the Philippines a few days after American forces took over. Charlie's decorations include the Pacific theatre ribbon with four bronze stars, including Saipan, the Marshalls, the Philippines, and a few about which he isn't talking.

We had a similar visit a few days ago from TECHNICAL SERGEANT CLAUDE KERSCHNER '45 when he came back after some thirty missions over Germany as a radio gunner on a Liberator. He wore a double row of ribbons, including the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with a row of oak leaf clusters. He told us--as Haps and I questioned him--about getting rid of at least two German fighters. In one of the actions, his last before returning to the States, his hand was hit with shrapnel and he still is carrying it in a cast. He's ready to go back into action again, as soon as possible he says, and he hopes it will be on a B-29.

Before we forget about it, we want to tell you that we hope by this time all of you have received your Christmas gift of stationery and another envelope with our Christmas greeting and calendar. In case any of you haven't received the stationery kit, we have reserved a few to take care of you. If you didn't get your gift, or if it doesn't come through within the next week or ten days, drop us a line and we'll mail you another one. If you are in the Army and overseas, be sure that you specifically request the Christmas gift, because that is the only way the post office will permit us to mail it to you. Don't be bashful. We want everyone of you fellows to have one and, incidentally, we are ready to provide you with refills if you request them. This year we mailed gifts to 1,600 men--to all of the 1662 on the service roster except those for whom we have no addresses.

The news of the basketball team still is all good news--and we mean good. We have won the first six of our 26 scheduled games and the boys really click. We told you about our first victories over Juniata and Drew. Since then we defeated Princeton twice (no fooling, either), and added Penn State and Lehigh to our string of victories.



You would have enjoyed the games. In the first game with Princeton, in Rockne Hall in Allentown, we set them back 53 to 27 and used just about every player on the bench. In the second game, at Princeton, the score was 46-40. Between the two we had a close one with Penn State at Penn State, winning 37 to 36 in an extra five minute period after a game that was nip and tuck from the opening whistle. Lehigh succumbed 57 to 25 in another game that turned into a rout.

Saturday night we play St. Francis in Madison Square Garden. The only other game before Christmas is with Columbia University, in Allentown, on December 20. On December 30 we play the University of Pennsylvania at Convention Hall in Philadelphia--that advance tip is for the benefit of any of you who will be in Philadelphia at that time. Perhaps we can even persuade the Philadelphia Alumni Club to have a little party--like the one the New York club is having on Saturday night.

We're sorry to have to report that LIEUTENANT (j.g.) RAY L. TURNER '42 was killed in action in the South Pacific. Turner, pilot of a carrier-based dive bomber, a few months ago received the Distinguished Flying Cross for scoring a direct hit that caused the sinking of a Jap merchantman. In the citation accompanying that award the Navy paid him a compliment that would have been characteristic of Ray: "His skill and courage were at all times in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Naval Services." We could only add, all of us who knew him, "--in keeping with the highest traditions of Muhlenberg.

In the last letter we told you that TECHNICAL SERGEANT RICHARD REICHARD, son of Professor and Mrs. Harry Hess Reichard, was reported missing in action over Italy. The news has changed and Dick, who was forced down near the Adriatic coast of Italy, has rejoined his command.

LIEUTENANT ALFRED SENSENBACH '42, reported missing in action in Belgium since September 25, is a prisoner of war in Germany. Al has been overseas since June 1943, serving as an administrative officer in an Army medical unit.

All of us are holding high hopes that we will receive the same good news about LIEUTENANT PAUL R. KUHN '42, navigator on a Liberator, who has been missing in action over Burma since October 22. Paul has more than 300 hours of combat flying to his credit and has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with clusters.

The mail bag is filled with letters from Muhlenberg men who either are on Leyte or who took part in the invasion. LIEUTENANT JAMES A. KILPATRICK '33, for example, was on one of the baby flat tops that saw plenty of action in that historic push. "It was a hectic day" is his brief comment on it. When he got back to Pearl Harbor he had the good fortune to run into his brother-in-law, ENSIGN THOMAS MILLER '44 and BEN WATSON '33, who has a government assignment down there.

Then there is SERGEANT WALTER STOLZ '43 who arrived on Leyte on D Day and who admits that it was quite a spectacle and mighty rough. Just before he wrote to us he saw two Jap Zeros shot down in flames. There's nothing to equal seeing that, he claims, and we don't think any of you will disagree.

PRIVATE GORDON TREISBACH '37 agrees that the most thrilling thing to see is the shooting down of Jap Zeros and to watch them take their pilots to join their honorable ancestors. Both he and Stolz admit being scared--plenty scared--on many occasions. FRED WAVREK '34, an American Red Cross Field Director, was the first of that outfit to land on Leyte and immediately got busy setting up headquarters at a field hospital. Up to November 14 his organization had distributed 35 tons of supplies to men arriving at the hospital and to those in the front lines--necessary comfort articles together with radios, phonographs, records, and the like.

LIEUTENANT CHARLIE TRINKLE '42 landed in the Philippines a few

days after the assault forces, wading in in hip-deep water. The natives he says, are very thankful for the presence of the Americans, who, in contrast to the Japanese, treat them like kings. GM3/c WILLIAM HOLTZ '46 has been looking for Muhlenberg men on Leyte but so far seems to have missed all the boys who are there. Another of the boys he might find down there is LIEUTENANT PAUL FRITSCH '40, who was glad to get back to civilization when he hit the Philippines, in spite of the necessity to constantly duck into fox holes. ENSIGN CALVIN LOEW '43 had a first row seat for the invasion and after that claims he is all set for the Victory Reunion. I think we told you in the last letter that LIEUTENANT (j.g.) WILMER CRESSMAN '42 also was in the front row for that push. With that kind of Muhlenberg representation--and there are probably more from whom we should be hearing--it's no wonder that the news from Leyte is good.

CAPTAIN CARL PROEHL '39 of the Marines is keeping busy somewhere in the Pacific, but with so many islands we haven't the slightest idea of which one has been selected as his base. Perhaps it's Guam--and if it is he will find Marine LIEUTENANT ARTHUR HILL '43 looking for him. HAL/c RICHARD JACOBS '46 is busy in a Naval hospital somewhere out there and has been helping take care of the boys since the invasion of Tarawa. ENSIGN FREDERICK HEUER '44 can't tell us much about his location either, other than that it's in the Pacific. Wherever it is, he says he's glad he wasn't a Jap on it when the American forces arrived. You can take his word for it that the Americans did a real job of destruction and then of reconstruction. ENSIGN GENE COCHRANE '38 is on his ship and the two of them have some good old-fashioned Muhlenberg bull sessions. Heuer is assistant navigator of the ship and Cochrane the gunnery officer. That sounds like a good combination to take care of any Japs who happen to get in their way.

Another Muhlenberg pair compare notes regularly on one of the big battlegroups in the Pacific--LIEUTENANT (j.g.) FREDERICK RAKER '40 and ENSIGN HAROLD STEWART '44. Both of them are looking forward to what they call "the super victory reunion." They won't let us down and we'll try not to let them down either. Perhaps one of these days they can have a little reunion of their own with Marine PRIVATE FIRST CLASS LARRY HAYDEN '46, who is on one of the many occupied islands of the Pacific. And perhaps their battlegroup will even make a stop in the Admiralty Islands where they may run into AERM2/c WARREN HIMMELBERGER '43. We're saving his description of sunrise and sunset in the Pacific for the next issue of the Alumni Magazine.

SERGEANT HAROLD HELFRICH '44 is back on duty after his rest in the highest mountains known to man. To say the Himalayas are wonderful and that he did enjoy his vacation, is putting it mildly, so Harold claims.

LIEUTENANT KERMIT K. KISTLER '38 is busy on a shakedown cruise of his ship, wishing he were back home freezing with us instead of perspiring where he is. PRIVATE ROY A. BUTTERWICK '46 dropped us a line from Belgium the other day. His letter was interrupted by a robot bomb that went over his head, but he went right on with it. On his way to Belgium, PRIVATE RICHARD Z. KINARD '43 saw a bit of France but missed Paris. He's saving that for the return trip. In Belgium, he says, his wish for a White Christmas is definitely coming true--mixed with a bit of mud, of course.

The England that LIEUTENANT RAY MOATZ '42 discovered was not the England he read about. He has had enough missions to get his second oak leaf cluster to add to his air medal ribbon. After travelling around the British Isles, he says he'd prefer to spend his time in Scotland where "the people are friendly and definitely not Scotch." Over in Belgium, LIEUTENANT EDWARD B. EDWARDS '44 followed Muhlenberg's football season in the Stars and Stripes. Since CAPTAIN A.A. FIORAVANTI '31 has been in France and Belgium, he has been reminded that he should have paid more attention while in French classes at Muhlenberg. LIEUTENANT ALLAN A. MAKI '44 recently arrived overseas and reported to a B-25 base on Corsica for combat duty. The Twelfth Air Force reports that he will serve as pilot with a veteran B-25 Mitchell bomber group

that has been in combat since the Tunisian campaign. Artillery and mortar fire has been the main worry for SERGEANT JOSEPH FISKE '45, stationed in the mountains of France.

Now to get back to the States for a quick look at mail that still travels by train. APPRENTICE SEAMAN HOWARD LUCKENBACH '46 is in a Naval Training program at Dartmouth--shades of Kingsbury Badger who has introduced Muhlenberg freshmen to that little New England school. PRIVATE EARL A. BENDER '45 was transferred from the Navy V-12 unit at F. and M. to the unit at Villanova. He's waiting, however, to finish his education at Muhlenberg when he returns to civilian life once again. PRIVATE FIRST CLASS EARL K. RITTER '29 had a bit of bad luck in November when he suffered a heart attack at MacDill Field, Florida. He's coming along nicely, so he tell us.

PhM3/c GEORGE P. NITTOLO '44 stationed at the Main Dispensary at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, says he hasn't run across another college that is as thoughtful of its alumni in service as Muhlenberg. Thanks to the rest of you fellows who have said the same thing. We like to think that Muhlenberg is that kind of a college--or did we tell you that one before. MAHLON HELLERICH '40 and RALPH HERBST '43 held their own alumni reunion at Camp Wolters, Texas where for weeks they have been located within five barracks of each other.

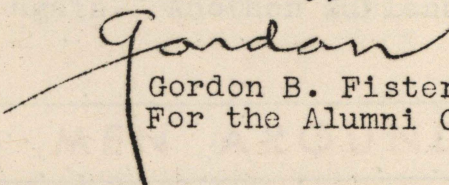
Joining the highest ranks of our Navy delegation is L.C. Peppell '19, recently advanced from Commander to Captain. He is Supervisory Cost Inspector of the Third Naval District with headquarters in the Federal Office Building, 90 Church St., New York. CORPORAL IVAN HANDWERK '39 is completing the last phases of his training with a B-29 Squadron at Harvard, Neb. SPEC. (A) GEORGE HOWATT, that outstanding parliamentarian and organizer of the Class of '40, has capitalized on his habits of health, diet, and calisthenics and is busy as a physical training instructor in Glenn L. Martin plant in Baltimore. SEAMAN FIRST CLASS RICHARD WAGNER '46, who has a San Francisco FPO address but apparently is still in the States, says that his battalion is unique in that they have music for chow--a swing band of 15 pieces and two vocalists. He plays third trumpet. On the side he's attempting to help out a bit by teaching English. Down at the Naval Auxiliary Air Station at Boca Chica, Fla., Navy LIEUTENANT ARTHUR R. CHATTEN '29 and LIEUTENANT WINNIE SLEMMER '27 have been getting to see a good bit of each other.

The list of promotions is nothing to be sneezed at this time, so here goes: FIRST LIEUTENANT SAMUEL OTTINGER '43; SPECIALIST (A) GEORGE HOWATT '40; SECOND LIEUTENANT NELSON F.S. BRAMER '37; SERGEANT MARLOWE HARTUNG '45; LIEUTENANT (j.g.) FREDERICK S. RAKER '40; CAPTAIN L.C. PEPPELL '19; SECOND LIEUTENANT CHARLES R. REINSMITH '41; ENSIGN WILTON HARDY '44; SERGEANT EDWARD B. SCHIFREEN '37; FIRST LIEUTENANT RALPH D. HAAF '46; PRIVATE FIRST CLASS LAWRENCE A. HAYDEN '46; CAPTAIN KENNETH P. LAMBERT '39; GUNNER'S MATE 3/c WILLIAM H. HOLTZ '46; SERGEANT JOSEPH W. FISKE '45; FIRST LIEUTENANT LEE L. SNYDER '42; LIEUTENANT IRVIN V. UHLER '35; LIEUTENANT WILMER J. WOLF '33; and MAJOR FORREST G. MOYER '35.

We will be thinking particularly of you fellows as we begin the usual round of Christmas activities here on the campus. Today we had our annual joint Carol service with Cedar Crest and, as usual, the chapel was packed. Next Thursday night we'll sing carols in the chapel and then gather around the Christmas tree in front of the President's home for our little tree lighting ceremony. Once again this year the tree will be dark, but we'll have a few torches to provide illumination as we sing Silent Night and stir memories of other years when so many of you started the Christmas season at that tree.

I've wished all of you a Merry Christmas in another letter, but in this one Elsie and Kitty and Mrs. Ritter join in best wishes for you wherever you may be and whatever you may be doing. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Sincerely,


Gordon B. Fister
For the Alumni Office